

23

TWENTY-THIRD

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

DIRECTORS

OF

JAMES MURRAY'S ROYAL ASYLUM

FOR

LUNATICS.

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JUNE 1850.

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PERTH :

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MDCCCL.



# LIST OF OFFICE-BEARERS,

1850—51.

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# REPORT.

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By the elapse of another twelvemonths, it has become the duty of the Directors to present the Twenty-third Annual Report of the Institution; and in doing so, it affords them sincere satisfaction to know that it still continues to confer important benefits on the community.

During the past year, forty-six Patients have been admitted—nineteen Males and twenty-seven Females. Twenty-four have been dismissed cured—eleven Males and thirteen Females; four have been removed by their friends or parishes, more or less benefitted—three Males and one Female; and twelve have died—four Males and eight Females; and there now remain in the House, one hundred and sixty-eight Patients—ninety-one Males and seventy-seven Females.

Six Patients have been admitted during the past year more than during the preceding twelvemonths; and whereas in June 1849, the total number in the House was 162, the number at present in the House is 168.

Another gratifying circumstance in the statistics of the past year, is the number of cures as compared with the admissions, the former being very nearly one-half of the latter, a fact which ought to operate as a powerful inducement to the friends of the insane, to procure for them, at an early stage of their malady, the benefits of a well conducted Asylum. “The Physician,” observes Dr Conolly, “to any large Asylum, must, among the recollections of any one year, have that of Patients brought to the Asylum a few days, or a week or two, after the mania appeared, and of having seen them wild, and bewildered, and impulsive, and scarcely conscious, and presenting many or all of the phenomena which have been enumerated, and yet who, in a few months, and sometimes in a few weeks, and sometimes in a few days, have been trans-

formed so entirely by advancing convalescence, as scarcely to be recognised : their whole appearance and manner—their very features having become so calm and tranquil—that, to recall the distracted objects seen on their admission, requires an effort of the memory.” (Lecture in *Lancet*, Oct. 1849.) The experience of this Institution, during every succeeding year, affords ample illustration of the truth of these observations.

Suitable occupation and amusement are very essential in the treatment of the insane : and while there are the means of recreation within the Asylum grounds for the Patients, the Institution is not possessed of a work-shop,—a want which has often been seriously felt, particularly for a certain class of Patients, and which has proved, in other Institutions, a powerful auxiliary as a means of cure. The best mode of supplying this want may probably soon engage the attention of the Directors.

The Report for the year ending June 1849 contains a variety of Tables, exhibiting full statistics of the Institution, from its commencement downwards, and containing information both interesting and instructive ; and of course some years must again elapse, to allow fresh materials to accumulate, before the past and the present can be contrasted, and the results ascertained. 'The Table No. I. of the Physician's Report shows, in one view, the admissions, cures, dismissals, and deaths, during the past year, and the number of Patients remaining in the House ; and for other statistics, reference is made to the other Tables contained in that Report.

It only remains, in conclusion, that the Directors express their sincere wish for the welfare of this Institution, which has already proved a great boon to the County of Perth and its neighbourhood ; and they trust that, through the exertion of those in the Direction, combined with the skill and efficiency of the officers more immediately employed in the management and treatment of the inmates, it may, through the Divine Blessing, long continue to prosper, and to secure the confidence of the community.

# APPENDIX.

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## ANNUAL REPORT BY DR. MALCOM, TO THE DIRECTORS OF JAMES MURRAY'S ROYAL ASYLUM FOR LUNATICS.

10th June 1850.

THERE have been admitted into the Asylum, since last Annual Meeting, forty-six Patients—nineteen Males and twenty-seven Females. Twenty-four have been dismissed cured—viz., eleven Males and thirteen Females. Three have been removed improved—these were Males; and one Female was removed unimproved, after being in the Asylum for seventeen years. Twelve have died—four Males, eight Females.

I would first call the attention of the Directors to the gratifying fact, that the recoveries in this year have been nearly one-half of our admissions, which evinces that insanity is a disease as curable as most diseases of the human body; and also, that timely application and admission to the Asylum, is most beneficial and salutary in the treatment of the disease.

The following Tables exhibit, at length, the transactions of the past year.

Table I. takes a rapid retrospect of the admissions, recoveries, deaths, &c. from the opening of the Asylum in 1827, to June 1849. At this period, there remained in the House one hundred and sixty-two Patients, of whom ninety were Males and seventy-two were Females.

During this year, from June 1849, to June 1850, we have had

the admission of forty-six new cases—nineteen Males and twenty-seven Females; these being added to the number remaining at the end of last year, make altogether two hundred and eight Patients treated in the Asylum during the past year.

T A B L E I.

			Males.	Females.	Total.
Total Admissions from opening of Asylum in June 1827, to June 1850, - - - - -			389	359	748
Discharged during same period,—					
	Male.	Fem.			
Recovered, - - -	142	172			
Improved, - - -	39	43			
Unimproved, - - -	47	31			
Died, - - - - -	71	41			
			299	287	586
Remaining in the Asylum, June 1849, - - - - -			90	72	162
Admitted from June 1849, to June 1850, - - - - -			19	27	46
Total number of Patients treated during the past year, - - -			109	99	208
Discharged,—					
	Male.	Fem.			
Recovered, - - -	11	13			
Improved, - - -	3	...			
Unimproved, - - -	...	1			
Died, - - - - -	4	8			
			18	22	40
Remaining in Asylum, June 1850,			91	77	168

Table II. indicates the ages of all the cases treated during the year 1849-50, and also, proves that the greater number of cases were from above forty to forty-five years of age, and many of them averaging from sixty to eighty; and exhibits a fact well known to those who are concerned with the management of Lunatic Hospitals; for, as an institution progresses, its inmates become aged, from the simple fact, that the cured are dismissed to resume their occupations in the world, while the aged and incurable remain, from year to year, to our care. As formerly mentioned, we have now in the Asylum several examples of both Males and Females, who have reached their eightieth year, and who, by receiving attention to their necessities and comforts, are yet so robust in health, and so joyous in spirits, that they put to the blush many of their younger associates.

T A B L E I I.

Ages.	Males.	Females.	Total.
15 to 20 years, . . . . .	4	2	6
20 to 25 years, . . . . .	7	6	13
25 to 30 years, . . . . .	10	7	17
30 to 35 years, . . . . .	13	15	28
35 to 40 years, . . . . .	11	15	26
40 to 45 years, . . . . .	15	13	28
45 to 50 years, . . . . .	19	18	37
50 to 55 years, . . . . .	9	5	14
55 to 60 years, . . . . .	9	6	15
60 to 65 years, . . . . .	6	5	11
65 to 70 years, . . . . .	3	2	5
70 to 75 years, . . . . .	2	2	4
75 to 80 years, . . . . .	1	2	3
80 to 85 years, . . . . .	..	1	1
TOTAL, . . . . .	109	99	208

## TABLE III.

SHOWS THE LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN THE ASYLUM OF  
THE 208 CASES TREATED DURING THE YEAR 1849—50.

Duration of Residence.						Males.	Females.	Total.
Within	1 month,	.	.	.	.	3	3	6
	1 to 3 months,	.	.	.	.	6	14	20
	3 to 6 months,	.	.	.	.	6	6	12
	6 to 12 months,	.	.	.	.	11	8	19
	12 to 18 months,	.	.	.	.	7	4	11
	1 to 2 years,	.	.	.	.	4	9	13
	2 to 3 years,	.	.	.	.	2	6	8
	3 to 5 years,	.	.	.	.	13	14	27
	5 to 10 years,	.	.	.	.	14	11	25
	10 to 15 years,	.	.	.	.	19	7	26
	15 to 20 years,	.	.	.	.	12	11	23
	20 to 25 years,	.	.	.	.	12	6	18
TOTAL, . . . . .						109	99	208

From the above Table, we learn that nearly one-half of the Patients treated have been in the Asylum from three years and upwards, and that the remainder were in the House from five to twenty years. Even those who come under the less period—from one to three years, for instance—are very doubtful cases, as regards the cure; and many of them, indeed, are re-admissions of persons removed by parishes or friends, who become troublesome after removal, and were sent back. With such cases under treatment, there is no wonder why the recoveries are not greater, or that the inmates of any Asylum should yearly increase. Besides, the Board of Supervision, under the new Poor Law, have caused so many poor creatures to be searched out from their miserable homes, whose condition had been for years deplorable—who were denied perhaps not only medical assistance, but even

the necessaries of life, and sent them to the different Asylums. This act of humanity, while it confers the greatest blessing on those poor creatures, must also influence the increase in the list of incurables in every establishment, as they generally are of long standing disease, and some approaching to idiocy. We, by the mercy of Divine Providence, have not hitherto had reason to complain of the recoveries in this establishment: indeed, both Dr Thurmun's statistics of insanity, and our own Reports, establish the truth, that our recoveries, since the opening of the establishment up to the present time, have been on an average 41.90 per cent on the admissions,—a result very satisfactory, and excelled by few other establishments,—while the per centage of our deaths is perhaps less than in any other. But I have no doubt that the above mentioned circumstances will influence very much the per centage of future years' recoveries.

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#### TABLE IV.

SHOWS THE MENTAL DISEASES OF THOSE WHO WERE  
RESTORED TO REASON DURING THE YEAR 1849—50.

Mental Diseases.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Mania, (Acute), . . . . .	6	5	11
Monomania, . . . . .	2	2	4
Melancholia, . . . . .	..	..	..
1st Lypemania, . . . . .	2	3	5
2d, with strong suicidal tendency, . .	..	3	3
Moral Insanity, . . . . .	1	..	1
<b>TOTAL, . . . . .</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>24</b>

In the above Table are contained the mental diseases of those who recovered during the past year. Those of the maniacal

character I shall not enter upon, as they are treated upon general principles, for reducing excitement, and inducing quiescence in the system. But a few observations on the treatment of the melancholic cases, more especially those denoted in the Table as suicidal in tendency, may be interesting and instructive. Insanity (every one knows, who has had any experience in the treatment of the insane), is deeply interwoven with functional or organic disease in the animal frame;—and perhaps in no form of the mental diseases is this truth more apparent, than in the form of melancholia. The secretions are always vitiated, indications of which every one perceives in the dark-brown, bilious aspect of the anxious countenance—the unctuous, dark-looking skin—the foul tongue and breath—uterine organs often deranged. Cases of this kind are well known to be troublesome, and tedious to treat; for such individuals often refuse all food, as well as all medical remedies, which we are anxious to administer. The Patients referred to refused food for ten days or more before their admission; and one came in with her throat severely cut. The cut was first stitched, but very much against her wishes; for she endeavoured always to tear the wound open, by forcibly throwing her head backwards. This done, every manner of entreaty was resorted to, to induce her to take some soup, as she was much exhausted, both with the loss of blood and starvation. She would not, however, consent; so the stomach-pump was resorted to. The nostril-tube was passed along the floor of the nostril, and down the œsophagus: a quantity of soup was then pumped down, along with a doze of croton oil. This form of tube for the pump is now extensively used in Asylums, and is found to be a very useful instrument. This treatment cleared the bowels; and after a few more applications of the pump, she took her food and medicine. We took advantage of this, and put her through a course of pills, composed of blue pill, combined with quinine, twice a-day. The same treatment was resorted to with the other two cases, with the best effects. There, however, still remained

(although the condition of the body was very much improved), a morbid restlessness and want of sleep, for which an opiate, consisting of the solution of muriate of morphia, was recommended, beginning with one drachm each night, and increasing it to two, by degrees, as it suited the case. My idea is, that opiates are generally given in too small doses, not sufficient to overcome the morbid irritability of the system. In the cases here spoken of, they all took two drachms each night, for nearly two months: they slept well—every morning looked refreshed. The morphia is the best preparation for administering opiates; for, while it possesses all the advantages of the drug, it is free from those feelings of sickness and giddiness, thirst, &c. which opium generally induces in the morning. Indeed, after a Patient has undergone a course of purgatives, alteratives, and tonics, the use of this medicine may be considered an invaluable remedy.

T A B L E V.

INDICATES THE DURATION OF THE DISEASE, FROM ADMIS-  
SION TO DISCHARGE, IN THOSE WHO RECOVERED.

Duration of Disorder.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Within 3 months, . . . . .	2	5	7
From 3 to 6 months, . . . . .	4	5	9
— 6 to 12 months, . . . . .	2	2	4
— 1 to 2 years, . . . . .	1	1	2
— 2 to 5 years, . . . . .	1	..	1
17 years, . . . . .	1	..	1
TOTAL, . . . . .	11	13	24

## TABLE VI.

SHOWS THE DISEASES OF WHICH TWELVE PATIENTS DIED  
IN THE YEAR 1849—50.

Form of Disorder.	Male.	Female	Total.	Morbid Appearances.
Disease of the brain and nervous system. Apoplexy, .....	1	...	1	There was post mortem dissection of this case. Head was opened. All the membranes were deeply injected—baselar artery much loaded with calcarious deposit—rupture of a vessel in the choroid plexus—effusion of blood in the lateral ventricles in the form of clots.
Epilepsy of 20 years standing, with obstinate Diarrhœa, .....	1	...	1	No dissection.
Organs of Respiration— Pulmonary Consumption,	1	1	2	Usual appearance of tubercles in different stages of progress—large cavern in the superior lobe of the right lung. No examination of the female.
Disease of the Organs of Digestion — Disease of Mesenteric glands—Marasmus, .....	...	2	2	No examination permitted.
Peritonitis (acute), .....	1	...	1	Great effusion of sero-purulent matter in the peritonæum—effusion of lymph—perforation of the stomach near the pylorus—from intensity of inflammation.
Enteritis (acute), .....	...	1	1	No examination.
Puerperal Paritonitis, ...	...	1	1	No examination.
General Exhaustion, .....	...	2	2	No examination.
Old age (82 years)—Natural Decay, .....	...	1	1	
Total, .....	4	8	12	

## TABLE VII.

## AGES OF THOSE WHO DIED.

Ages.	Males.	Females.	Total.
From 30 to 35 years, . . . . .	1	3	4
— 35 to 40 years, . . . . .	0	2	2
— 40 to 45 years, . . . . .	0	1	1
— 45 to 50 years, . . . . .	0	0	0
— 50 to 55 years, . . . . .	2	1	3
— 55 to 60 years, . . . . .	1	0	1
82 years, . . . . .	0	1	1
TOTAL, . . . . .	4	8	12

Table VI. and VII. give the diseases and the ages in those who died, and I must make a few remarks here on one or two cases. One, a woman, was in the Asylum for only one night. It was a case of Puerperal Insanity, accompanied with a Typhoid Fever. She had some distance to come, and her friends brought her in that state in an open cart on a rainy cold day. It was all we could do, to get the poor woman into the House alive, and put her in bed. She was so chilled and exhausted, by disease and fatigue, that, notwithstanding all our efforts to restore her, she expired next morning. Another Female was brought in after suffering four days from acute Enteritis: she was so much sunk that we could not proceed actively with her. Large blisters over the abdomen, and gentle medicine, relieved her for a few days; but she could take very little food, so she sunk daily, and died in a fortnight from admission.

## T A B L E V I I I .

EXHIBITS THE FORM OF MENTAL DISORDER IN THOSE  
WHO DIED.

Mental Disorder.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Amencia, from Epilepsy, . . . . .	1	0	1
Demencia, . . . . .	0	4	4
Mania, . . . . .	2	2	4
Suicidal Melancholia, . . . . .	0	1	1
Monomania, . . . . .	1	1	2
TOTAL, . . . . .	4	8	12